

RUSSIAN GENOCIDE OF THE UKRAINIAN POPULATION: TOGETHERNESS DEFIES DEATH

Sergii Boltivets

State Institute of Family and Youth Policy, Ukraine
E-mail: boltivetssergij@i.ua

Mykhailo Stepyko

National Institute for Strategic Studies, Ukraine
E-mail: vstepiko@ukr.net

Lyudmyla Uralova

Shupyk National University of Healthcare of Ukraine, Ukraine
E-mail: uralova.lyudmila@gmail.com

Abstract

The article highlights the current consequences of the Russian war against Ukraine and Europe for the life of the surviving citizens of Ukraine, their well-being and health, as well as the impact of the Russian war on the viability of the countries of the European continent. Summarized data of the study of neurotic disorders in people who are waiting for death, and therefore under the influence of the most difficult experiences, are given. The most severe phases of distress caused by the approach of Russian bombers to a person's place of residence, the beginning of Russian artillery shelling of a residential building, volleys of Russian rocket systems "Grad", "Uragan", "Solntsepek", the fall of a Russian ballistic or cruise missile, the impact of a Russian drone with explosives were revealed. It was noted that, in general, neurotic disorders associated with the expectation of death arise and worsen in connection with Russian hostilities, terrorist acts, which lead to forced migration, which unfolds a picture of spontaneous reactions to social insecurity, disruption of life activities and, as a result, social maladaptation of refugees. Mental trauma is acquired through bombings, loss of loved ones, or being in harsh conditions where people suffered physically or psychologically, for example, being in the basements of houses under Russian artillery fire for many weeks, without food, water, linen, clothing and medicine. A comparison is made with the pandemic period of COVID-19, when Ukrainians were affected by the coronavirus pandemic, the result of which is the increase in the sense of unity among the citizens of Ukraine who remained alive more than twice. The war led to a significant rethinking of values and encouraged a greater appreciation of what a person has. This reduced the level of expectations and claims regarding the satisfaction of their needs. Despite negative emotions, the vast majority of people assess their mental state as basically normal, which does not require professional correction. Collective identity is an important protective feature of society, which exists only because a large number of people firmly believe that other people in similar circumstances will think and act as they do. In this case, the ideal of preserving health and life thanks to mutual understanding and joint efforts becomes the most achievable even under the conditions of the Russian genocide of the Ukrainian population.

Keywords: Russian war, Ukrainian citizens, neurotic disorders, anticipation of death, phases of distress, Russian bombings, Russian artillery fire, hostilities, rethinking of values, preservation of health and life, Russian genocide

Introduction

The Russian war against Ukraine and Europe significantly affected the daily life of every citizen of Ukraine, his well-being and health, as well as the sustainability of the countries of the European continent (de Rassenfosse et al., 2023; Gholiagha & Sienknecht, 2023; Loewe et al., 2024; Rendle & Retish, 2023). In particular, our study of neurotic disorders in people who are waiting for death, and therefore are under the influence of the most difficult experiences, revealed the most severe phases of distress caused by the approach of Russian bombers to their place of residence, the beginning of Russian artillery shelling of a residential building, volleys of Russian rocket systems “Hail”, “Hurricane”, “Solntsepek”, the fall of a Russian ballistic or cruise missile, the impact of a Russian drone with explosives.

Waiting For Death: The Neurosis of Preserved Life

In general, neurotic disorders associated with the expectation of death arise and worsen in connection with Russian hostilities, terrorist acts, which cause forced migration, which unfolds a picture of spontaneous reactions to social insecurity, disruption of life activities and, as a result, social maladjustment of refugees. During the Russian war against Ukraine, many people suffered psychological trauma due to bombings, loss of loved ones or being in difficult conditions where they suffered physically or psychologically, for example, being in the basements of houses under Russian artillery fire for many weeks, without food, water, clothes, and medicines. This is one of the most influential factors of the emotional state of contagion, which consists in a significant increase in the pathological consequences of each person's neurotic state associated with similar states in other people. It is safe to say that changing the people with whom the traumatic experience was acquired is important for changing the way you feel and relate to yourself and others. At the beginning of Russia's war against Ukraine, people's natural reaction to danger was aimed at increasing the chances of survival, which were manifested in the active search for ways of protection, communication, and opportunities to share assumptions about the nearest military risks and threats (Boltivets et al., 2022).

Confronting the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Russian Genocide

As our observations show, compared to the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, when Ukrainians were affected by the coronavirus pandemic, the sense of unity among Ukrainian citizens has increased significantly, i.e., more than twice. It can be assumed that it ensured the preservation of emotional stability and optimism of Ukrainians, which resists their mass destruction in the Ukrainian territories temporarily occupied by Russia. And it is quite possible that unity in the most difficult time for people is a mental trait of the Ukrainian nation that gives it strength and indomitability in deadly times. This was the case both in 2004-2005 and in 2013, when, despite the shootings of people on the Maidan in Kyiv, a slogan common to the entire Ukrainian nation arose: “Together we are many - we cannot be overcome!”. This solidarity is manifested, first of all, in the joint struggle against Russian aggression: helping the defenders of the Ukrainian state with resources, including medicines and dressing materials, deploying a massive paramedical network, participating in the informational struggle against Russian propaganda, raising the volunteer movement to help the front, partisan struggle with weapons in their hands on the lands of Ukraine occupied by the Russians.

On the other hand, from those indicators of the social well-being index, which in March 2022 decreased compared to 2021, the needs related to professional self-realization, nutrition, leisure and adaptation to the new reality stand out. In particular, the opportunities to work with full efficiency, have additional income, and buy the most necessary products have deteriorated. This is not surprising because among those surveyed in March 2022, 70% of respondents noted that, compared to pre-war times, their involvement in work had decreased, and only 8% had increased. This applies somewhat more to people from cities with more than a million inhabitants, those who have changed their place of residence due to the war, and women. With the beginning of the war, despite the danger to life, the readiness of Ukrainians to act, change their lives, help others, volunteer, and

desire to stay in Ukraine increased significantly. It is also obvious that the war led to a significant rethinking of the values of Ukrainians and encouraged them to value more, what they have.

War Dramatically Changes the Clinical Picture of Mental Disorders in Children

Rehabilitation of children and adolescents with related neuropsychiatric disorders accompanied by behavioral abnormalities in the conditions of the Russian war against Ukraine is an important direction of restoring health by means of overcoming war stress. Among the large number of peacetime works that indicate the complexity and ambiguity of solving the problem of treatment, rehabilitation and social adaptation of children and adolescents with related neuropsychiatric disorders accompanied by behavioral abnormalities, the most frequently discussed issues are related to school and social and labor maladaptation, risk factors in the formation of various manifestations of behavioral disorders. This clearly formed the idea of the need for this contingent of sick children not only drug therapy but also the development of special measures for sufficient social adaptation.

The events of the Russian war radically changed the clinical picture of disorders and their course. This, in particular, concerns the multiple acceleration of all processes that ensure and accompany the vital activity of children and adolescents, a significant expansion of the spectrum of psychogenic and neurotic ways of responding to various stresses.

Taking into account the unpredictable war circumstances, in our opinion, the problem of medical-pedagogical and socio-psychological correction of the specified contingent of patients can be solved only comprehensively, provided that qualified therapy is carried out, favorable social contacts are maintained, and the possibility of cognitive development is provided in the minimum amount of school content. In this regard, the need for the functioning of sanatorium-boarding schools of a psychoneurological profile as a way of implementing a systemic approach to the compilation and implementation of individual and group rehabilitation programs for children and adolescents who have suffered as a result of social stress is obvious. The main methodological principles of implementing such an approach include: partnership, diversity of influences, unity of psychosocial and biological methods, and gradualness of influences and measures.

Treatment and Protection Regimes for Children with Mental Disorders as a Result of Russian Hostilities

Based on the reasons for the formation of behavioral disorders and their features that we identified and that appeared or critically aggravated under the influence of military actions, we developed and tested differentiated treatment regimens for children and adolescents with deviant behavior and neurotic disorders in sanatorium boarding schools. These differentiated treatment regimens are presented as follows:

Regime A –

Complex medical influence (biological, psychopharmacological and physiotherapeutic methods of treatment, sanitation of foci of chronic infection, therapeutic exercise);

Regime B –

Primarily drug influence and therapeutic and pedagogical correction;

Regime C –

Primarily psychotherapeutic correction and therapeutic pedagogy, supportive therapy;

Regime D –

Occupational therapy.

The above regimens include purely medical and pedagogical measures, the significance and sequence of which varies depending on the clinical condition of the affected children and adolescents and the stages of their rehabilitation.

The stages of rehabilitation therapy and prevention of future mental disorders included the sequential implementation of rehabilitation measures.

The complex of therapeutic measures is carried out in conditions of a protective-sparing regime, which ensures a reduction in the dosed time of educational classes and labor training to 30-35 minutes, the cancellation of exams. To eliminate the decompensation of cerebrastrhenic syndrome in a certain number of individuals, general strengthening agents, dehydration therapy with absorbable agents, biogenic stimulants to improve the trophism of the hypothalamic area, nootropics to improve the metabolism of brain processes were used.

As a result of the course of treatment, favorable dynamics of mental functions were observed: a decrease in irritable weakness, fatigue, increased working capacity, a decrease in hyperactivity, and excitability.

Therapy and Rehabilitation of Psychopathological Conditions

The use of pathogenetic therapy for children and adolescents with cerebral residual organic insufficiency and pronounced behavioral disorders was supplemented by the differentiated appointment of psychotropic drugs. Electrotherapy was widely used. The effectiveness of electrosleep was mainly noted in sick children and adolescents with pronounced symptoms of cerebrastrhenia: increased fatigue, irritability, sleep disorders.

In rehabilitation work, an important place was given to therapeutic physical education. Therapeutic physical education classes contributed to the strengthening of the emotional-volitional sphere, improved working capacity, attentiveness, allowed to overcome manifestations of motor immaturity, hypodynamia, motor disinhibition, and had a generally strengthening effect on sick children and adolescents.

Physical therapy classes were conducted according to a developed scheme that took into account the following important components:

- The physical therapy instructor, together with the doctor, developed a plan for conducting classes, taking into account physical differences, clinical variants of diseases, individual characteristics of the development of children and adolescents.
- Groups were formed in a quantitative composition that did not exceed 10 people.
- The inclusion of more than one patient with pronounced behavioral disorders and a tendency to affective reactions in a physical therapy group was not recommended.
- Regardless of the type and severity of the painful manifestations, special attention was paid to the physiological curve of classes - a gradual increase with the subsequent gradual decrease in the load.
- Based on the above components, classes on rhythm and dance basics were developed and conducted, which contributed to the implementation and consolidation of the capabilities learned in physical therapy classes.
- For older adolescents, dosed sports activities were recommended, aimed at using excess energy and reducing aggressiveness.

It was mandatory to use medical and pedagogical correction against the background of drug treatment, aimed at improving intra-group relationships, establishing contact with peers, normalizing the family situation, school environment, and possible correction of incorrect upbringing.

Therapeutic, Pedagogical and Psychological Correction

Therapeutic and pedagogical correction of the studied children and adolescents with increased affective excitability included their involvement in games and activities that cause a pronounced emotional interest in educational and labor processes that end with an easy assessment of the result. The control over the collective with condemnation of incorrect behavior was of corrective importance. Group psychotherapy was used for this purpose. It is important to note that the effect of group therapy was insignificant in contrast to the use of short-term positive therapy focused on the resource capabilities of the child or adolescent. An in-depth comprehensive study of the immune system of sick children and adolescents allowed us to clarify and supplement our ideas

about the pathogenesis of related neuropsychiatric disorders and to determine treatment tactics based on prognostic immunological criteria for the effectiveness of therapy.

The readaptation of children and adolescents with behavioral abnormalities in the conditions of a psychoneurological sanatorium-boarding school is of paramount importance for achieving the maximum possible future social adaptation in society. In this regard, at the readaptation stage, medical and pedagogical influence is aimed at preventing deterioration of health and maximum adaptation to educational and labor activities and life outside the boarding health care institution. With this goal, the most effective for children and adolescents with initial and unexpressed manifestations of behavioral disorders, as well as after their elimination, is the use of regimens that combine therapeutic pedagogy, psychotherapy and occupational therapy. Therapeutic and pedagogical correction is carried out taking into account the personal characteristics of sick children and adolescents. In particular, adaptive capabilities are significantly impaired in children and adolescents with features of insecurity, anxiety, and timidity. To achieve an effect in the adaptation of this contingent of children, it is mandatory to use pedagogical correction and psychotherapy aimed at overcoming the feeling of inferiority, self-doubt, indecision, and a tendency to doubt. In addition, systematic encouragement is used in connection with the least successful completion of a task, involvement in the performance of feasible assignments not related to increased responsibility, in collective affairs, as well as individual, rational psychotherapy.

The formation and consolidation of positive behavioral traits was carried out by means of rational psychotherapy and short-term positive psychotherapy with family members and a sick child or teenager. The smoothing of negative premorbid traits was achieved at the level of rational psychotherapy through family relationships, and the stabilization of positive premorbid traits was carried out by conducting family psychotherapy sessions. Sanatorium-type boarding schools for children and adolescents with behavioral disorders have sufficient conditions for the wide application of music, bibliotherapy, and aesthetic therapy. The effectiveness of these means was especially evident in connection with the war, as a result of which, among children and adolescents and their family members, the most urgent problems of the neurotic level arose, i.e., anxiety, depression, phobias, exacerbation of severe mental disorders and their consequences, as well as adaptation to society and psychological problems that arise in connection with this.

Restoring Communication and the Ability to Resist Russian Invaders

Correction of communication difficulties of adolescents was carried out by means of socio-psychological trainings, which contributed to the formation of self-regulation skills when performing communicative exercises. Labor training acquired one of the primary values, since it gave sick children and adolescents the greatest emotional satisfaction from the realization of their part of the role in holding the front by the soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, for whom they wove camouflage nets, made trench candles, amulets, drew pictures, bound letters to the front, etc.

A positive impact on the emotional and volitional regulation of sick children and adolescents was exerted by classes in art, carpentry, bookbinding, sewing, technical circles, especially those related to the assembly and control of drones.

The final stage of rehabilitation was carried out by conducting instructional psychotherapy sessions, providing recommendations on future daily routines for children and adolescents, their communication tactics when irritable weakness appears, behavioral complications in relationships with peers, older and younger children, teachers and adults, family members when changing their place of residence, when transferring to other classes and schools, during evacuation and during other significant changes related to military operations.

Thus, for the contingent of sick children and adolescents who suffered as a result of military events, not only drug therapy is necessary, but also the use of special medical, pedagogical and psychotherapeutic measures for their sufficient social adaptation. In this regard, the need for the functioning of sanatorium boarding schools of a psychoneurological profile as a way of implementing a systemic approach to the development and implementation of individual and group rehabilitation programs for children and adolescents who have suffered as a result of Russian military aggression is obvious.

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According to the results of another poll conducted by Ilko Kucheriv's "Democratic Initiatives" Foundation, when talking about their own future, the main emotion that prevails during the war, 40.7% of respondents named anxiety. Much less respondents say hope (22%) and fear (17.9%). Only 4.6% of respondents noted that they feel a lack of psychological support services. Despite negative emotions, the vast majority assesses their mental state as basically normal, which does not require professional correction. Hopes for the future of the state increased from 43%, which were in the pre-war period, to 61.1% at the time of the survey. This is a very high percentage, and this has never happened in peacetime, - said Andrii Hirnyk, professor of the Department of Psychology and Pedagogy of the National University "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy" at the online press conference "Feelings of Ukrainians during the war: emotions, expectations, personal experience". In his opinion, one of the important factors affecting this may be the hope for future economic assistance from the West - the so-called Marshall Plan for Ukraine (The well-being of Ukrainians ... 2024).

Conclusions

Under the conditions of Russian aggression, the collective identity of the citizens of Ukraine, which is not connected to a specific person, but is a virtual reality, has undergone significant transformations and is an important protective property of society. It exists only because some people firmly believe that other people in similar circumstances will think and act in the same way as they do. It is this common belief in certain phenomena or processes that makes them real in the social space, that is, real in their consequences for specific individuals. Collective events that show people that their community exists are important to strengthen a sense of collective identity.

The collective identity of "We" covers two processes: first, a person realizes his similarity to a group of people capable of survival, and therefore preservation of his own life in the conditions of the Russian war against Ukraine. Secondly, she must act, that is, represent this community, thereby confirming her belonging to it and her hope for the preservation of her own health and life and the health and life of her family members, close people. This identity has a spectrum of various manifestations, from simple awareness of oneself as a representative of such a group to full devotion to it, when group interests dominate personal ones. In this case, the ideal of preserving health and life thanks to mutual understanding and joint efforts becomes the most achievable even under the conditions of the Russian genocide of the Ukrainian population.

Conflict of Interest

The three authors declare their complete solidarity and the absence of any conflict of interest among themselves, and at the same time about the millennia-old conflict between the Mongoloid world, represented by the war of modern Russia against the Europeans, primarily Ukraine and the peoples of the European continent and the collective West. This work was done at the personal kind request of Angela Roy to support the rally around the Biomedical Journal of Scientific & Technical Research (BJSTR).

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Sergii Boltivets (Corresponding author)	PhD, Professor, State Institute of Family and Youth Policy, Ukraine. E-mail: boltivetssergij@i.ua ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4432-5272
Mykhailo Stepyko	PhD, Professor, National Institute for Strategic Studies, Ukraine. E-mail: vstepiko@ukr.net ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9499-0097
Lyudmyla Uralova	Shupyk National University of Healthcare of Ukraine, Ukraine E-mail: uralova.lyudmila@gmail.com ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8432-2642